



# INTEGRITY, ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Babita Arora

Assistant Professor, Partap College of Education, Ludhiana.

## ABSTRACT

A value system's abstraction depth and range of applicable interaction may also function as significant factors in identifying integrity due to their congruence or lack of congruence with observation. A value system may evolve in a while, while retaining integrity if those who else ethics when discussing behaviour and morality, an individual is said to possess the virtue of integrity if the individual's actions are based upon an internally consistent framework of principles. These principles should uniformly adhere to sound logical axioms or postulates. One can describe a person as having ethical integrity to the extent that the individual's actions, beliefs, methods, measures and principles all derive from a single core group of values. An individual must therefore be flexible and willing to adjust these values in order to maintain consistency when these values are challenged; such as when an expected test result fails to be congruent with all observed outcomes. Because such flexibility is a form of accountability, it is regarded as a moral responsibility as well as a virtue. An individual's value system provides a framework within which the individual acts in ways which are consistent and expected. Integrity can be seen as the state or condition of having such a framework, and acting congruently within the given framework.

**KEYWORDS:** ethics, integrity, professional, values.

## INTRODUCTION

Integrity is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness. It is generally a personal choice to uphold oneself to consistent moral and ethical standards. In ethics, integrity is regarded by many people as the honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one's actions. Integrity can stand in opposition to hypocrisy, in that judging with the standards of integrity involves regarding internal consistency as a virtue, and suggests that parties holding within themselves apparently conflicting values should account for the discrepancy or alter their beliefs. The word *integrity* evolved from the Latin adjective *integer*, meaning *whole* or *complete*. In this context, integrity is the inner sense of "wholeness" deriving from qualities such as honesty and consistency of character. As such, one may judge that others "have integrity" to the extent that they act according to the values, beliefs and principles they claim to hold.

One essential aspect of a consistent framework is its avoidance of any unwarranted (arbitrary) exceptions for a particular person or group—especially the person or group that holds the framework. In law, this principle of universal application requires that even those in positions of official power be subject to the same laws as pertain to their fellow citizens. In personal ethics, this principle requires that one should not act according to any rule that one would not wish to see universally followed. For example, one should not steal unless one would want to live in a world in which everyone was a thief. The philosopher Immanuel Kant formally described the principle of universal application in his categorical imperative. The concept of integrity implies a wholeness, a comprehensive corpus of beliefs, often referred to as a worldview. This concept of wholeness emphasizes honesty and authenticity, requiring that one act at all times in accordance with the individual's chosen worldview.

## Need of Professional Ethics

### Professional ethics are very important in education

- To aware the teachers to do their duties and abiding by truth, hard work and honesty when they tend towards comforts, selfishness, laziness and money.
- To change the conduct and behavior of teachers in such a way behind which there must be social acceptance and approval.
- To act as a role model for students by behaving in ethical manner to one and all.
- To create, sustain and maintain a reciprocal relationship between school and society for ensuring harmonious development of the students as well as of society.
- To enable every teacher for becoming a real one in truest sense of the term by moulding his personality.

## Establishment

This Code of Ethics for Educators was developed by the distinguished AAE Advisory Board and by the Executive Committee of AAE. It contains four basic principles relating to the rights of students and educators.

### PRINCIPLE I: Ethical Conduct toward Students

The professional educator accepts personal responsibility for teaching students

character qualities that will help them evaluate the consequences of and accept the responsibility for their actions and choices. We strongly affirm parents as the primary moral educators of their children. Nevertheless, we believe all educators are obligated to help foster civic virtues such as integrity, diligence, responsibility, cooperation, loyalty, fidelity, and respect-for the law, for human life, for others, and for self.

The professional educator, in accepting his or her position of public trust, measures success not only by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her personal potential, but also as a citizen of the greater community of the republic.

1. The professional educator deals considerably and justly with each student, and seeks to resolve problems, including discipline, according to law and school policy.
2. The professional educator does not intentionally expose the student to disparagement.
3. The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning students, unless required by law.
4. The professional educator makes a constructive effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health, or safety.
5. The professional educator endeavors to present facts without distortion, bias, or personal prejudice.

### PRINCIPLE II: Ethical Conduct toward Practices and Performance

The professional educator assumes responsibility and accountability for his or her performance and continually strives to demonstrate competence. The professional educator endeavors to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, and by demonstrating personal integrity.

1. The professional educator applies for, accepts, or assigns a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications, and adheres to the terms of a contract or appointment.
2. The professional educator maintains sound mental health, physical stamina, and social prudence necessary to perform the duties of any professional assignment.
3. The professional educator continues professional growth.
4. The professional educator complies with written local school policies and applicable laws and regulations that are not in conflict with this code of ethics.
5. The professional educator does not intentionally misrepresent official policies of the school or educational organizations, and clearly distinguishes those views from his or her own personal opinions.
6. The professional educator honestly accounts for all funds committed to his

or her charge.

7. The professional educator does not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

#### **PRINCIPLE III: Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues**

The professional educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, accords just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.

1. The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues unless required by law.
2. The professional educator does not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system.
3. The professional educator does not interfere with a colleague's freedom of choice, and works to eliminate coercion that forces educators to support actions and ideologies that violate individual professional integrity.

#### **PRINCIPLE IV: Ethical Conduct toward Parents and Community**

The professional educator pledges to protect public sovereignty over public education and private control of private education. The professional educator recognizes that quality education is the common goal of the public, boards of education, and educators, and that a cooperative effort is essential among these groups to attain that goal.

1. The professional educator makes concerted efforts to communicate to parents all information that should be revealed in the interest of the student.
2. The professional educator endeavors to understand and respect the values and traditions of the diverse cultures represented in the community and in his or her classroom.
3. The professional educator manifests a positive and active role in school/community relations.

Ethical standards in education contain basic principles, procedures and behavior patterns based on commitment to core values that are deeply rooted in education. Ethical standards enable educators, students and administrators to maintain and promote quality education.

#### **Professional Code of Ethics for Teachers**

There are certain code of ethics which every teacher has to follow, these are discussed as below:

##### **1. Working with Students**

A teacher's job is to provide a quality education to all students. A professional code of ethics must address this fact, stating that teachers must not show favoritism or discriminate against students. Teachers also must interact with students appropriately, not taking advantage of students in any way, bullying students or putting them down. Contact with students outside of the classroom or school building must be kept to a minimum and must focus on school-related activities and events.

##### **2. Student Safety**

In addition to a teacher's job to help all students learn, a professional code of ethics also addresses a teacher's responsibility to keep students safe. Teachers must abide by all school and classroom safety procedures to ensure student safety. It's also a teacher's responsibility to report instances of bullying and harassment. If a teacher suspects cases of abuse or neglect, or a student confides in a teacher in cases of abuse or neglect, the teacher is required to report it to the proper authorities, even if the student requests otherwise.

##### **3. Professional Practice**

Teachers must maintain ethical behavior in professional practice by accurately representing and maintaining certifications, licenses and other qualifications. Applying for a teaching certificate with false information or lying about meeting the requirements to renew the certificate can lead to a loss of teaching privileges. In addition to qualifications, teachers must practice ethical behavior when it comes to reporting grades and handling assessments. Misrepresenting grades or altering student responses on assessments can lead to criminal charges and the loss of a job.

##### **4. Working with Colleagues**

In a school, teachers must collaborate with administrators, fellow teachers and other employees in order to provide a safe and positive learning experience for students. A teacher must follow the direction of administrators, even if rules or expectations seem unreasonable, in order to avoid undermining an administrator's authority and to set a positive example for students. When disagreements arise between teachers, they must handle the disagreements in private and refrain from talking negatively about colleagues in front of students. In addition, teachers must engage in appropriate relationships with colleagues, keeping personal feelings and adult behaviors out of the school.

##### **5. Interacting with Stakeholders**

Aside from colleagues, teachers have a responsibility to interact positively with parents and other stakeholders in a child's education. Contact with parents must be kept professional, free from arguments and physical contact. If a teacher has an issue with a parent, another teacher or administrator must be present during all meetings. Teachers also must avoid being unduly influenced by parents and other stakeholders when it comes to students' grades or other school-related matters.

##### **Conclusion**

A professionally accountable teacher must be excellent not only in the subject to be taught, but also understand the learning requirements of the students. He should be caring, affectionate and sympathetic towards them for their harmonious development and prosperity of nation. Hence it is essential that a teacher must be accountable towards his students, society, profession, teaching-learning process, knowledge and values. Hence, quality education is possible when a teacher has the ethics and accountability towards his profession.

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